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NEGATIVE
BURN
NABIEL KANAN • BRIAN BOLLAND • PHILLIP HESTER • GREG DIGENTI • DOUG WHEELER • ZANDER CANNON

NEGATIVE BURN

A Mad Hatter Studios
International Product

Joe Pruett ~ Editor

VOLUME ONE
NUMBER TWENTY-TWO

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written and illustrated by Nabiel Kanan

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DONOR ..... Page 24
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FATHER ..... Page 34
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illustrated by Robert Lewis

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written and illustrated by Zander Cannon

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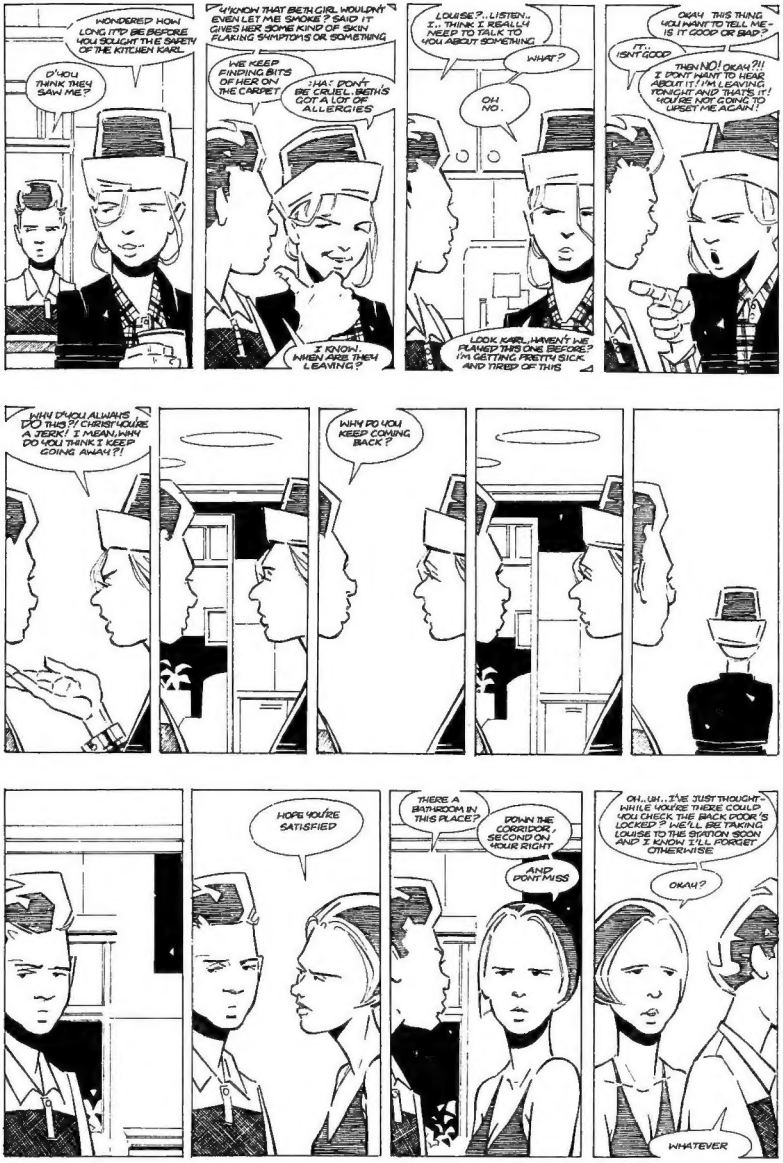
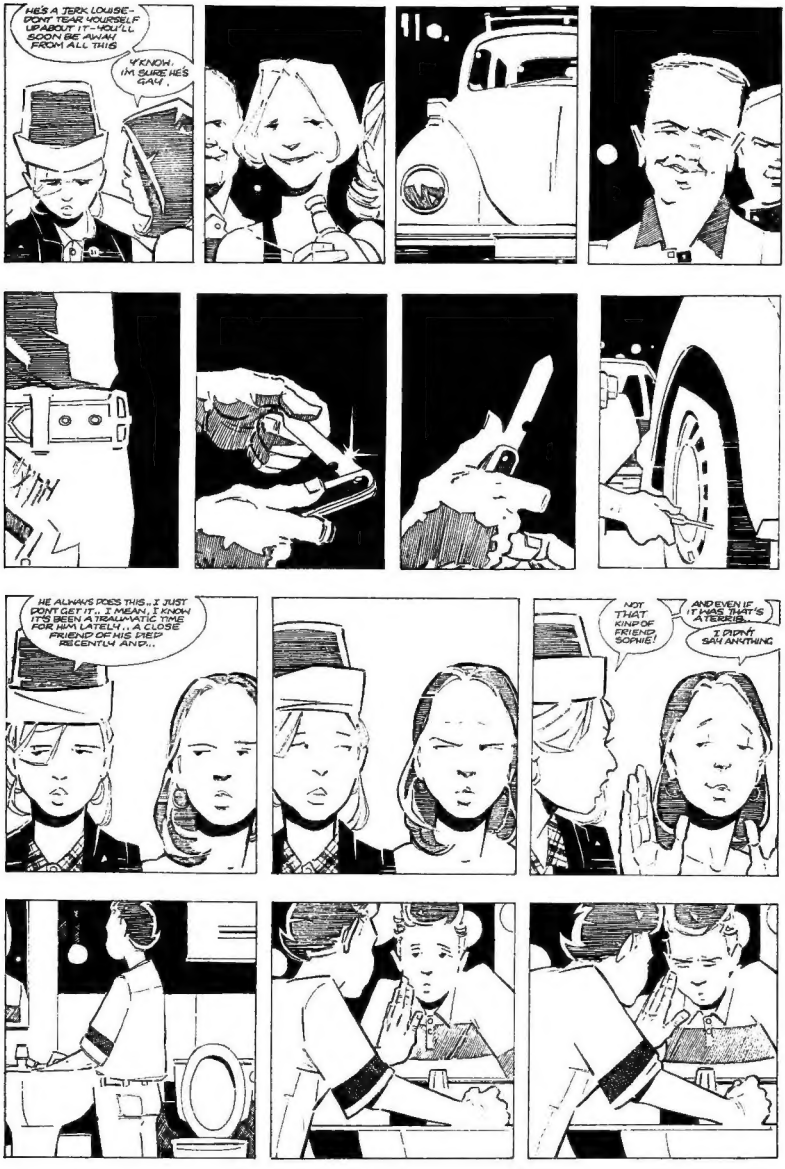
P.O.Box 893, Acworth, GA 30101

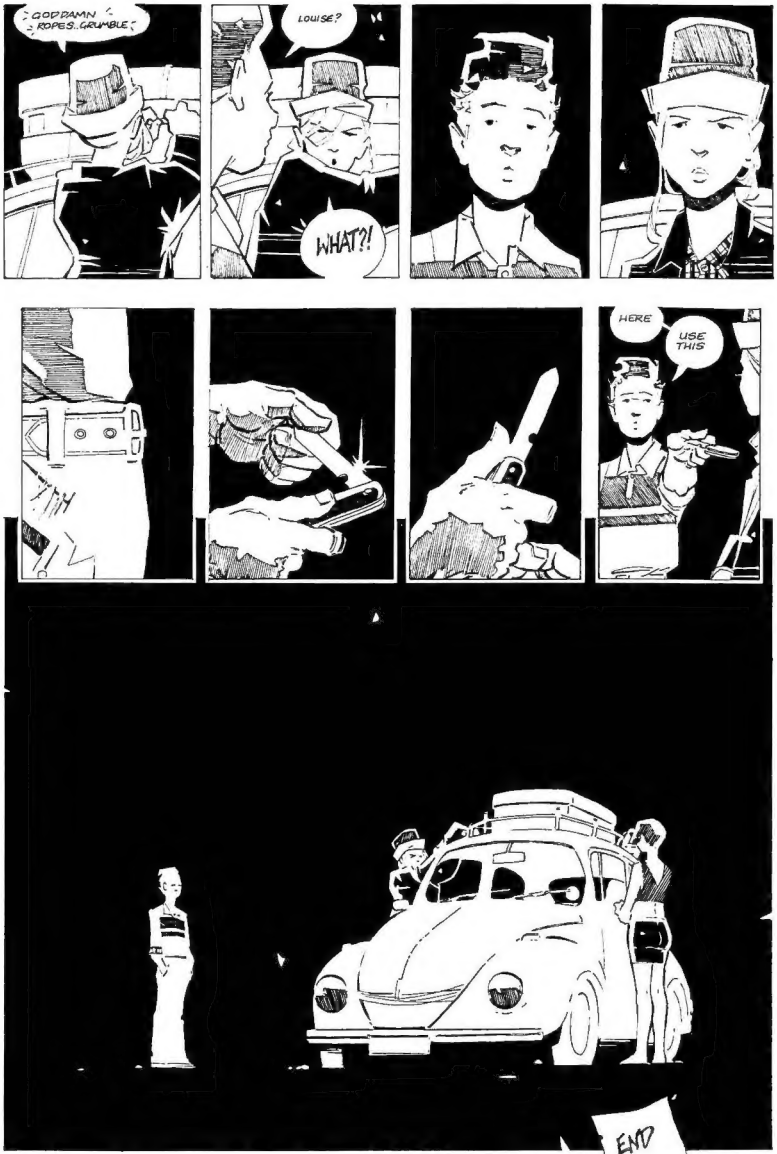
YKNOW WHAT RACHEL? I'M REALLY GOING TO MISS THIS COUNTRY
CAT.
SORRY.
I'M NOT SURE THIS WAS SUCH A GOOD IDEA NOW RACHEL. I MEAN I KNOW BETH WOULD BE UPSET IF I LEFT WITHOUT SAYING GOODBYE BUT THERE'LL HARDLY BE TIME FOR ME TO SAY HELLO BEFORE WE'LL NEED TO BE LEAVING FOR THE STATION
AND RACHEL? I'M A BIT WORRIED ABOUT LEAVING MY LUGGAGE OUT HERE IN THE CAR. YOU SAW THOSE DRUNKEN MASFITS HANGING ROUND BACK THERE. AND I THINK I SAW SOME KIDS TRYING TO BREAK INTO A CAR FURTHER BACK UP THE ROAD.
EXIT
HEY, LOUISE? SHUT UP. OKAY?
OKAY
THANK YOU
..DID YOU LOCK YOUR SIDE?
exit
©n.kanan

RACHEL!
LOUISE!
HI!
COME IN!
SO HOW ARE YOU BETH?
I'M GOOD! GOOD! HOW'RE YOU?
I'M OKAY
HOW 'BOUT YOU LOUISE? ALL SET FOR YOUR TRAVELS TOMORROW?
LOUISE?
HI LOUISE
I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO BE HERE KARL...
WELL, I HEARD YOU'D BE CALLING HERE BEFORE YOUR TRAVELS TO FRANCE TOMORROW. YOU'RE GETTING THE EARLY MORNING FERRY FROM DOVER AREN'T YOU?
YEAH, I GET THE LAST TRAIN DOWN TO LONDON TONIGHT-RACHEL'S GIVING ME A LIFT TO THE STATION. THEN FROM LONDON A CONNECTION DOWN TO THE COAST, THEN A FERRY TO CALAIS, AT WHICH POINT I START SPEAKING VERY BAD FRENCH.
...AND SO THAT'S WHY I HATE SPIDERS..
CAN I GO WITH YOU TO THE STATION P'RAPS JUST TO SEE YOU OFF. THIS LOT WON'T BE STAYING MUCH LONGER.
WELL, IT'LL BE A TIGHT SQUEEZE. RACHEL'S JUST PROMISED KARL A LIFT BACK HOME AFTER SHE'S DROPPED ME AT THE STATION
I SUPPOSE WE COULD PUT MY SUITCASE ON THE ROOF RACK
GREAT! SO, TELL ME ABOUT THIS ART COLLEGE YOU'LL BE ATTENDING IN FRANCE. IT'S PHOTOGRAPHY ORIENTATED ISN'T IT?
YEAH, WELL THE COURSE DOESN'T ACTUALLY START FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS BUT I'M GOING OUT THERE EARLY TO GET SETTLED IN Y'KNOW?
I'VE ALREADY BEEN OUT THERE A COUPLE OF TIMES THIS SUMMER TO CHECK IT OUT. I COULDN'T MAKE UP MY MIND AT FIRST...
DON'T TALK TO ME ABOUT PHOBIAS! BLUCH! I'VE GOT THIS PHOBIA OF BLUCH! JUST THINKING ABOUT IT TURNS MY STOMACH. I'M TERRIFIED IF I GET WITHIN A MILE OF IT - YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHAT IT IS...
SOAP?
LUCKY GUESS, RIGHT?


WONDERED HOW LONG IT'D BE BEFORE YOU SOUGHT THE SAFETY OF THE KITCHEN KARL.
D'YOU THINK THEY SAW ME?
D'KNOW THAT BETH GIRL WOULDN'T EVEN LET ME SMOKE? SAID IT GIVES HER SOME KIND OF SKIN FLAKING SYMPTOMS OR SOMETHING.
WE KEEP FINDING BITS OF HER ON THE CARPET.
:HA: DON'T BE CRUEL. BETH'S GOT A LOT OF ALLERGIES
I KNOW. WHEN ARE THEY LEAVING?
LOUISE?.. LISTEN.. I.. THINK I REALLY NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING.
WHAT?
OH NO.
LOOK KARL, HAVEN'T WE PLANNED THIS ONE BEFORE? I'M GETTING PRETTY SICK AND TIRED OF THIS
OKAY THIS THING YOU WANT TO TELL ME - IS IT GOOD OR BAD?
IT.. ISN'T GOOD.
THEN NO! OKAY?!! I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ABOUT IT! I'M LEAVING TONIGHT AND THAT'S IT! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO UPSET ME AGAIN!
WHY D'YOU ALWAYS DO THIS?! CHRIST YOU'RE A JERK! I MEAN, WHY DO YOU THINK I KEEP GOING AWAY?!
WHY DO YOU KEEP COMING BACK?
HOPE YOU'RE SATISFIED
THERE A BATHROOM IN THIS PLACE?
DOWN THE CORRIDOR, SECOND ON YOUR RIGHT
AND DON'T MISS
OH..UH..I'VE JUST THOUGHT - WHILE YOU'RE THERE COULD YOU CHECK THE BACK DOOR'S LOCKED? WE'LL BE TAKING LOUISE TO THE STATION SOON AND I KNOW I'LL FORGET OTHERWISE
OKAY?
WHATEVER


HE'S A TERK LOUISE- DON'T TEAR YOURSELF UP ABOUT IT - YOU'LL SOON BE AWAY FROM ALL THIS
Y'KNOW.. I'M SURE HE'S GAY.
HE ALWAYS DOES THIS.. I JUST DON'T GET IT.. I MEAN, I KNOW IT'S BEEN A TRAUMATIC TIME FOR HIM LATELY.. A CLOSE FRIEND OF HIS DIED RECENTLY AND..
NOT THAT KIND OF FRIEND, SOPHIE!
AND EVEN IF IT WAS, THAT'S ATERRIBLE..
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING

I THOUGHT YOUR FRIENDS WERE NEVER GOING TO LEAVE, BETH
I THOUGHT KARL WAS NEVER GOING TO LEAVE THE BATHROOM
YOU DON'T DESERVE TO COME WITH US TO THE STATION KARL
OH LET THE JERK COME WITH US IF HE WANTS TO RACHEL. LET'S JUST GO DOWN!
I'M GOING TO MISS MY TRAIN
RACHEL?
RACHEL WHY ARE WE SLOWING DOWN?
RACHEL?
THERE IT IS. THERE'S A SMALL GASH JUST THERE. LOOKS LIKE YOU WERE RIGHT TO WORRY ABOUT THAT DRUNKEN MOB HANGING ROUND NEAR BETH'S HOUSE.
THIS ISN'T HAPPENING
HOW LONG 'TIL YOUR TRAIN LEAVES?
FIFTEEN MINUTES
IT'S GOING TO TAKE ME.. AT LEAST TWENTY FIVE MINUTES TO CHANGE THIS
I'M REALLY SORRY LOUISE
FINE
WH.. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I'M GETTING MY LUGGAGE OFF HERE AND I'M GOING HOME
H.. HOW?
I'LL USE THE SPICE MELANGE. HOW DO YOU THINK?


GODDAMN ROPES..GRUMBLE
LOUISE?
WHAT?!
HERE
USE THIS
END

THE LAKE DISTRICT

THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT
THE LAND OF WORDSWORTH AND WAINWRIGHT.
OF MELVIN BRAGG, RUSSEL HARTY,* AND DONALD CAMPBELL. LAKE CONESTON, WHERE CAMPBELL HIT THE WATER AT 300 M.P.H., IS KNOWN AFFECTIONATELY AS "CAMPBELL SOUP."
HELVELYN, SKIDDAW, WATENDLATH, SEATALLEN, WETHERLAM, GLARAMARA THE EVOCATIVE NORSE NAMES.
THE DECEPTIVELY UNDERSTATED: HIGH STREET, SLIGHT SIDE, THE NAB, YOKE, AND GREAT COCKUP.
A SPLENDID WAY OF SPENDING A SUMMER'S DAY.
A BRISK PULL TO THE TOP.
A LUNCH OF KENDEL MINT CAKE AND A FLASK OF TEA AS I ENJOY THE AWESOME VIEW FROM THE SUMMIT OF GREAT GABLE.
AND THEN DOWN IN TIME FOR A DELICIOUS MEAL OF CUMBERLAND SAUSAGE.
LOVELY DAY.
LOVELY.

* RUSSEL HARTY COMES FROM YORKSHIRE.

POACHER

WHAT ARE YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I AM A BUSINESSMAN, MISTER HENSHAW.
BEFORE YOU SHOOT ME, YOU MAY WANT TO LISTEN TO A PROPOSITION THAT I HAVE FOR YOU.

STORY by JIM FRIER

ART by PHILLIP HESTER

ART ASSISTS by CASKEY, ERICKSON, RUNYAN, WALLS & WOODYARD

LETTERED BY GARY PETERSON

EDITED BY JOE PRUETT

I'M LISTENING.
VERY WELL.
I AM A SALESMAN, MISTER HENSHAW. I DEAL IN THE SELLING OF CERTAIN ITEMS THAT CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED BY THE KILLING OF VARIOUS FORMS OF WILDLIFE.
I DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE KILLING MYSELF. I MERELY GUIDE HUNTERS TO THEIR PREY AND COLLECT THE ITEMS THAT I NEED AFTER THE HUNT IS COMPLETED.
SO YOU'RE A SKIN TRADER.
WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH ME?
AS YOU MAY GUESS, THE HUNTS THAT I ARRANGE ARE NOT ALWAYS ENTIRELY LEGAL. THIS FORCES ME TO BE VERY SELECTIVE IN MY CHOICE OF HUNTERS. YOU, ASIDE FROM BEING ONE OF THIS WORLD'S FINEST HUNTERS, FIT ALL THE OTHER CRITERIA.
I AM THEREFORE OFFERING YOU THIS RARE OPPORTUNITY.
WHAT DO I GET OUT OF IT?
WHY, A TROPHY, OF COURSE. THE RAREST TROPHY AN EARTHMAN COULD HAVE. BECAUSE YOUR PREY IS NOT AN INHABITANT OF THIS WORLD.
I'M IN.

WE HAVE ARRIVED.
I TRUST THAT YOU ARE PREPARED?
OF COURSE.
VERY WELL. THESE ARE THE TRACKS OF THE CREATURE THAT YOU ARE TO HUNT.
IT IS CALLED THE VROX, AND IT IS A FEARSOME BEAST.
YOU WILL KNOW IT WHEN YOU SEE IT.
THE VROX IS KNOWN TO INHABIT THIS VALLEY.
YOU HAVE STUDIED MAPS OF THE AREA, SO YOU SHOULD HAVE NO PROBLEMS. I KNOW THAT YOU DO SOME OF YOUR BEST WORK IN UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY.

IS *THAT* WHY YOU CHOSE ME, BECAUSE I'M GOOD ON UNFAMILIAR TERRAIN?
THAT, *AND* YOU FIT THE OTHER CRITERIA.
I WAS PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED WITH YOUR HABIT OF HUNTING YOUR *OWN* KIND.
IT'S A PITY THAT YOU COULDN'T HANG *THOSE* TROPHIES ON YOUR WALL.
RELAX, MISTER HENSHAW. I HAVE NO INTEREST IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE.
BUSINESS IS BUSINESS.
YOU MAY KEEP ANY TROPHY YOU WANT, BUT *THE CLAWS* ARE MINE.
IN POWDERED FORM, THEY ARE CONSIDERED A POWERFUL *APHRODISIAC* BY THE INHABITANTS OF SARKA.
HAPPY HUNTING.

THE HUNT BEGINS.
THE TRAIL IS EASY TO FOLLOW. THE PREY IS UNAWARE THAT IT IS BEING STALKED.
THERE!

IT'S SEEN ME.
LOCK
RANGE 210M
KRAK!
POW
AN INTENTIONAL MISS...
... JUST TO MAKE THE GAME MORE INTERESTING.

NOW THE CHASE!
THIS CREATURE MAY BE VICIOUS AND DEADLY, BUT IT'S NOT VERY SMART.
THIS CANYON IS A DEAD END.
THE GAME IS OVER.

THE PREY IS TRAPPED, AND I SMILE TO MYSELF.
BECAUSE NOW I HAVE YOU...
...EARTHMAN!

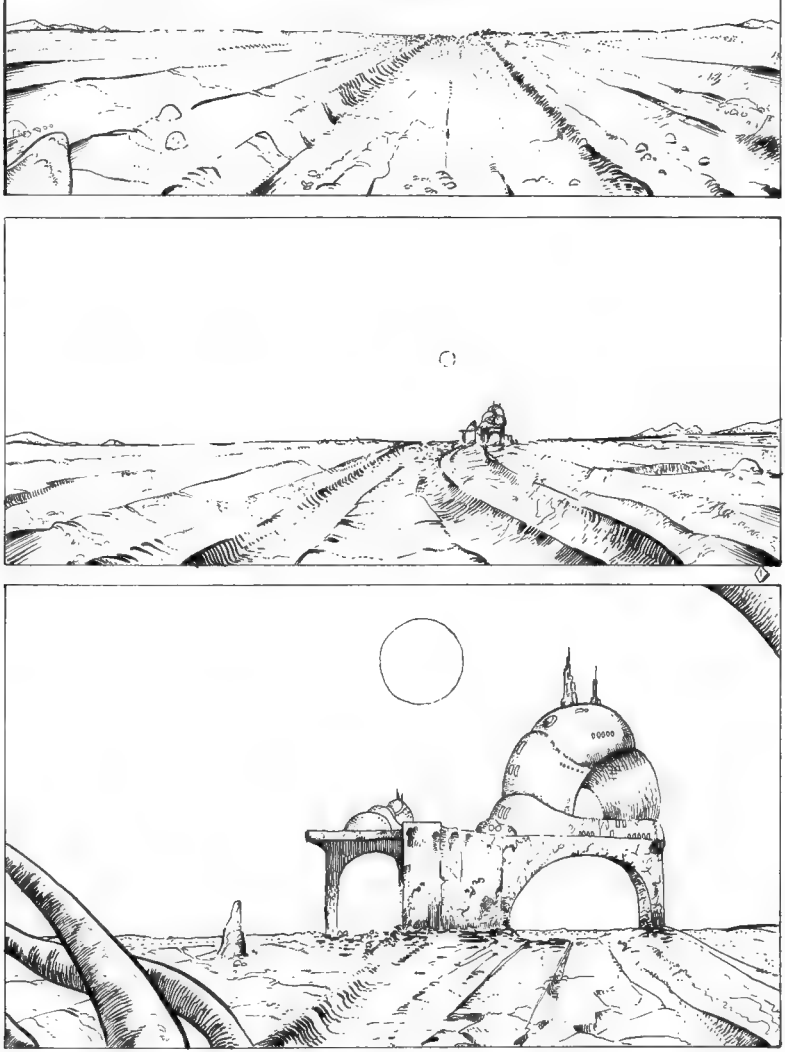
HELLO, MY FRIEND.
I TRUST THAT THE HUNT WAS SUCCESSFUL ?
AS USUAL.
OBSERVE MY TROPHY. DO YOU NOT THINK THAT IT WILL LOOK NICE ON THE WALL OF MY LODGE ?
OF COURSE
AND WHAT OF MY PAYMENT ?
AH, YES, THE HEART.
WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH SUCH A THING ?
BUSINESS, FRIEND VROX, BUSINESS.
IT IS CONSIDERED A POWERFUL APHRODISIAC BY THE INHABITANTS OF AIARA.
THE END.

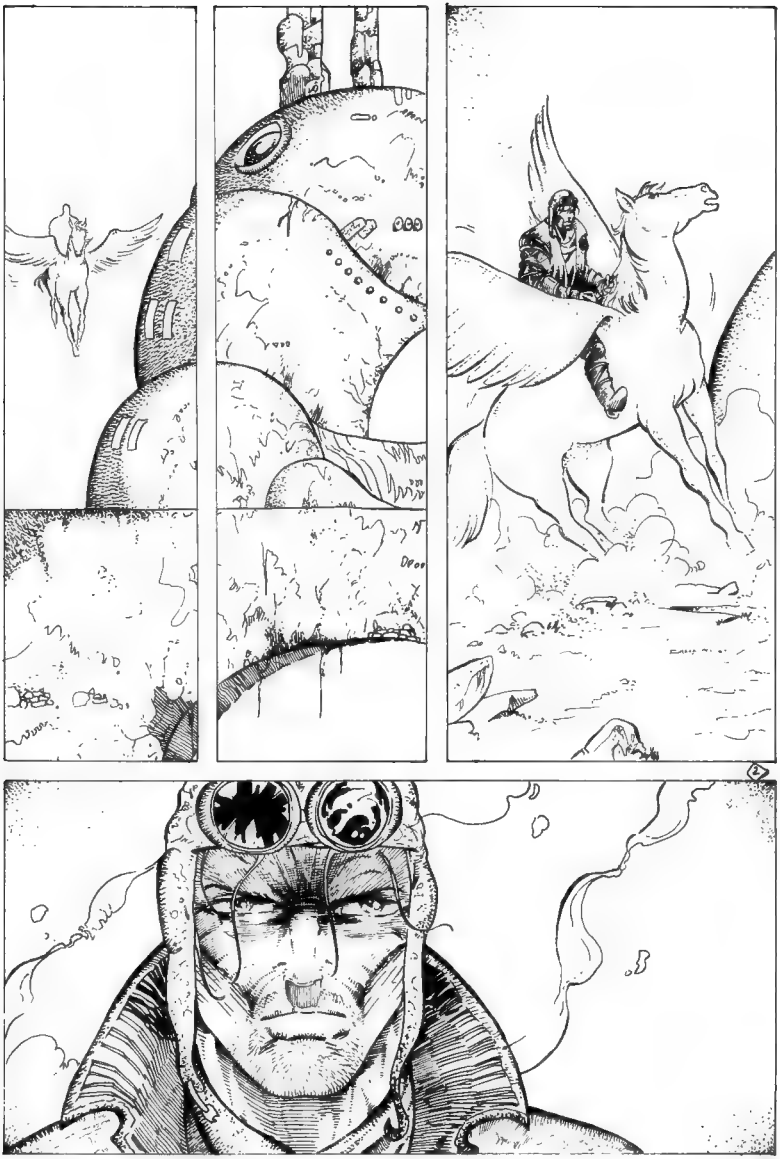
"Ooh, Baby, That's What I Hate!"
Words & funny pictures by Greg DiGenti
Hi. My name's Charlie Seldom. You know, you may not believe this, but I've been accused of being an asshole many times in my 21 years o' living.
It's funny, though, because I really don't think of myself as an asshole.
Pop!
I mean, maybe I don't make any attempt to repress my opinions when something pisses me off, and just about everything does-
...Uh, I guess I can see how that might make me come off as seeming sort of asshole-like, but I... uh... I don't... um...
...Aw, hell, maybe I am an asshole. Let's just talk about something else.
GULP GULP GULP
BUURRUP!
Ahem Uh... I'll talk first, if you don't mind. you can talk after I leave or something...

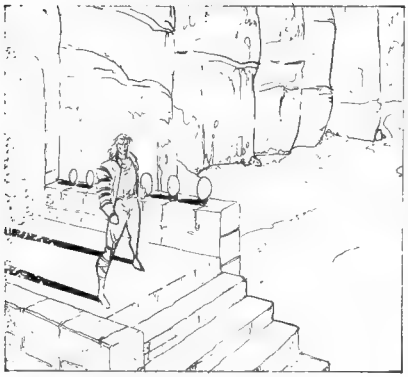
You see, the **important** thing here is **not** what other people think of **me**, but what **I** think of **other people**.
CLUNK
I mean, I may take a **lot** of heat when I voice my negative opinions about different things, but **that's** only cuz people prefer to believe **nothing** I say is **true**, that I'm just being too **judgmental** or whatever...
... but I'm sure that while they're spouting all this **crap**, they're thinking, "**Man**, this Charlie guy **sure knows** what he's **talking** about!"
And, of course, **I do**. Nobody likes to hear the truth if it's too **grim** or too **negative**, I guess.
Hell, all **I'm** doing is pointing out some of life's annoyances as I **see** them. If people don't see things **my way**, they're only fooling **themselves**.
But **hey**, I don't want to seem like a **total** downer. I mean, I may be **angst ridden** and **judgmental**, but I don't hate **everything**, of course.
Seriously, I-uh-I can think of **plenty** of things that I like... **My God!** What the **hell** is **that?!**
A **roach?!** Oh, **well!** There you **go!** There's something I like!
Smashing roaches!
End!

LOST PARADISE

JOE PRUETT PHILIP XAVIER







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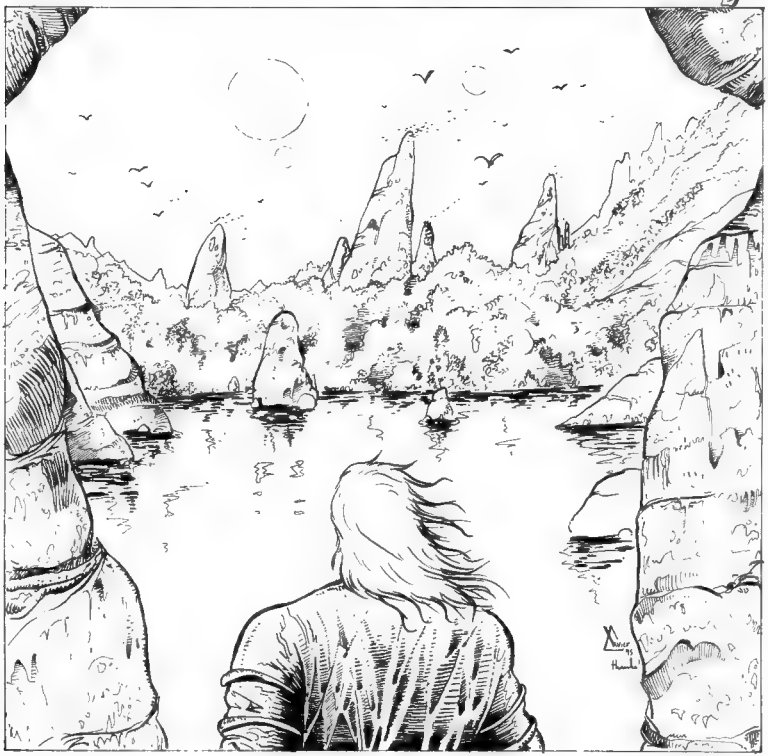
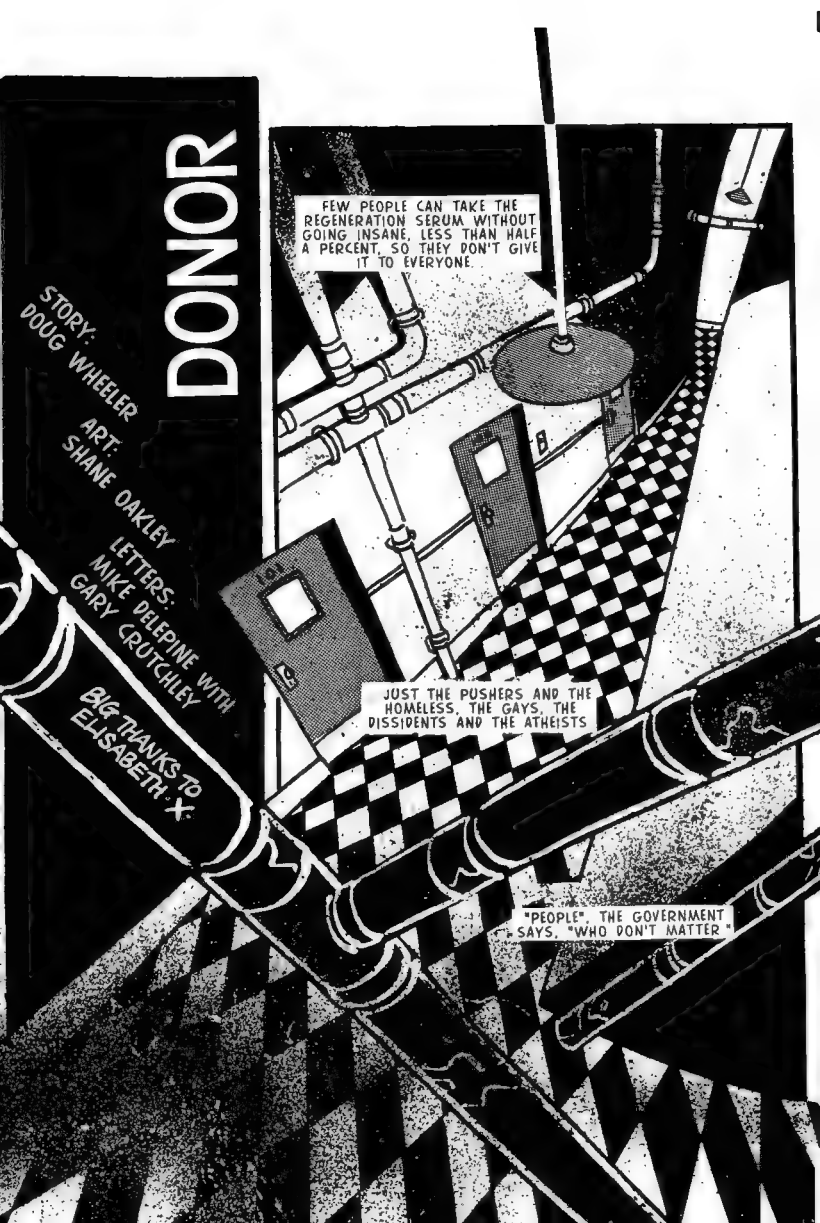
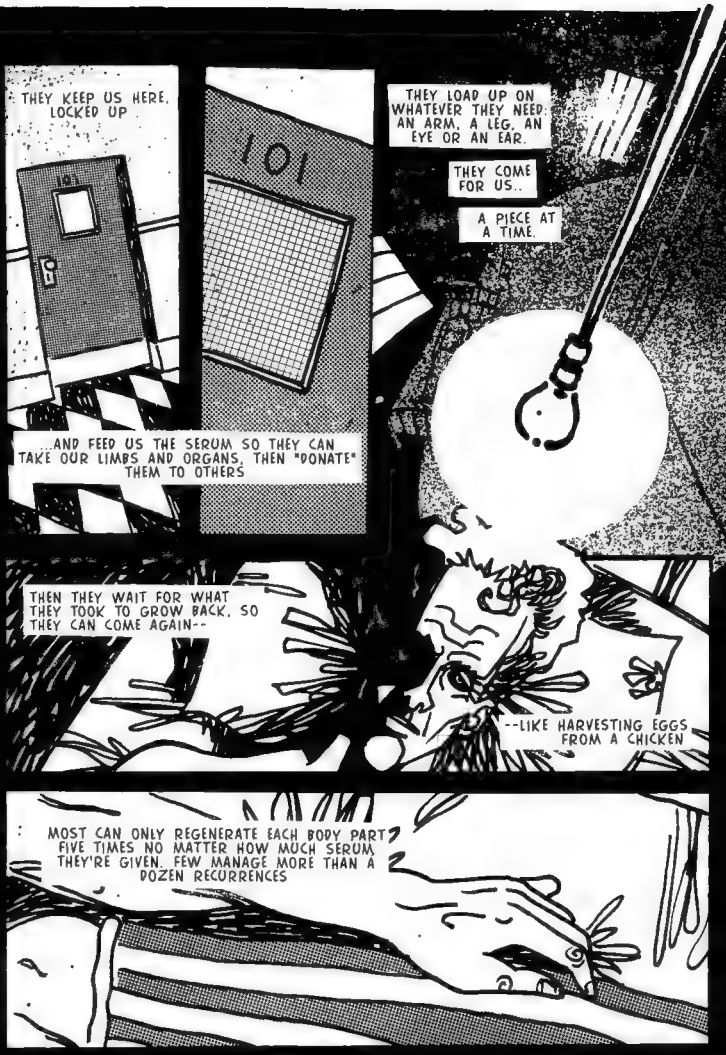
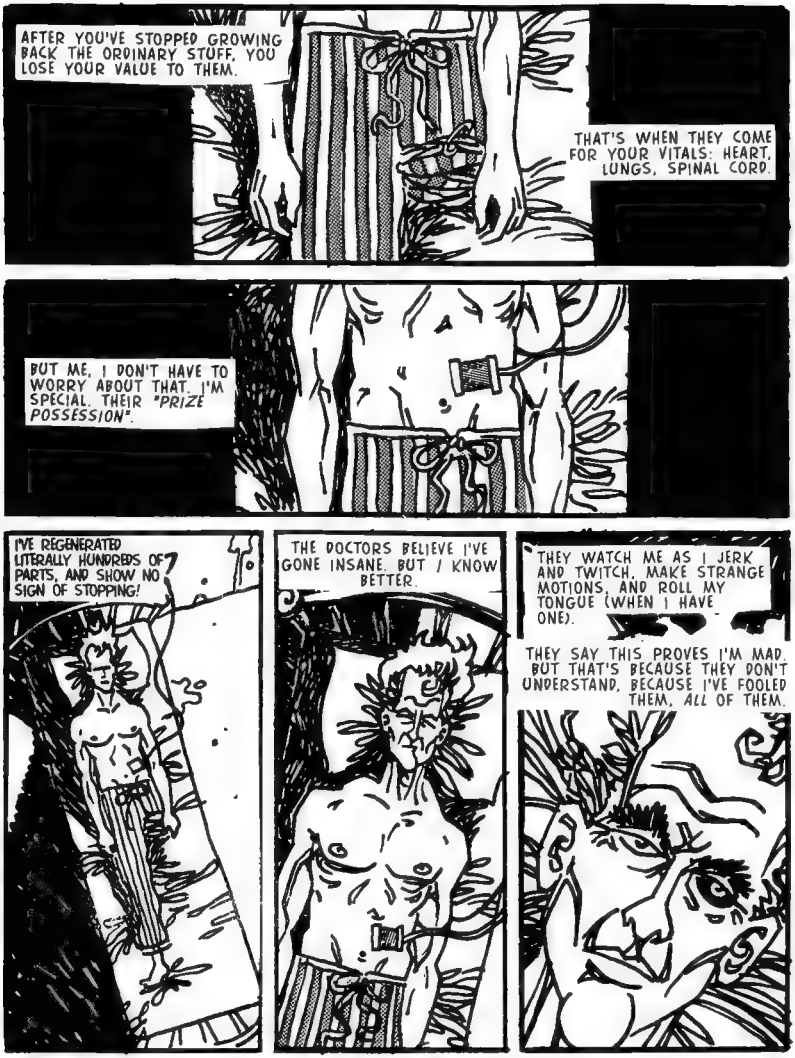



DONOR
STORY: DOUG WHEELER
ART: SHANE OAKLEY
LETTERS: MIKE DELEPINE WITH GARY CRUTCHLEY
BIG THANKS TO ELISABETH X.
FEW PEOPLE CAN TAKE THE REGENERATION SERUM WITHOUT GOING INSANE, LESS THAN HALF A PERCENT, SO THEY DON'T GIVE IT TO EVERYONE.
JUST THE PUSHERS AND THE HOMELESS, THE GAYS, THE DISSIDENTS AND THE ATHEISTS
"PEOPLE", THE GOVERNMENT SAYS, "WHO DON'T MATTER."

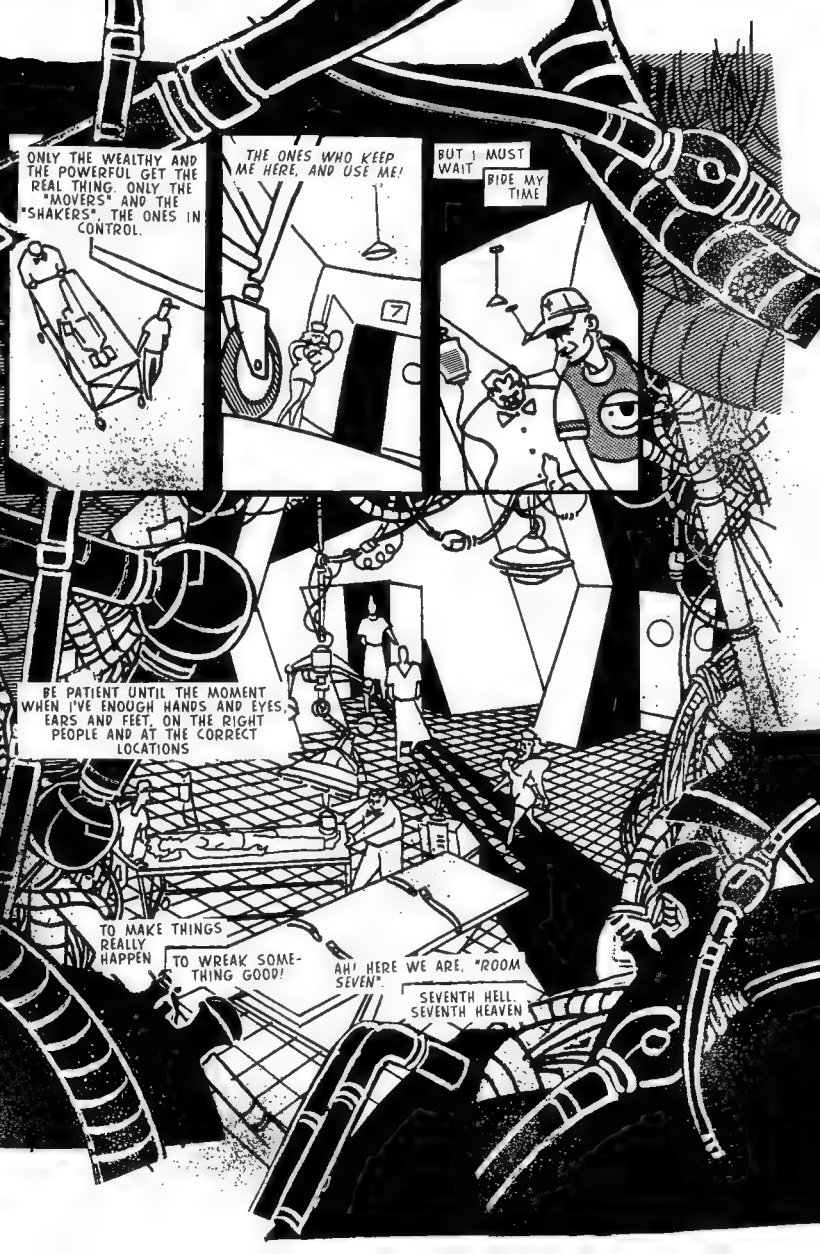

THEY KEEP US HERE, LOCKED UP
101
...AND FEED US THE SERUM SO THEY CAN TAKE OUR LIMBS AND ORGANS, THEN "DONATE" THEM TO OTHERS
THEY LOAD UP ON WHATEVER THEY NEED: AN ARM, A LEG, AN EYE OR AN EAR.
THEY COME FOR US..
A PIECE AT A TIME.
THEN THEY WAIT FOR WHAT THEY TOOK TO GROW BACK, SO THEY CAN COME AGAIN--
--LIKE HARVESTING EGGS FROM A CHICKEN
MOST CAN ONLY REGENERATE EACH BODY PART FIVE TIMES NO MATTER HOW MUCH SERUM THEY'RE GIVEN. FEW MANAGE MORE THAN A DOZEN RECURRENCES


AFTER YOU'VE STOPPED GROWING BACK THE ORDINARY STUFF, YOU LOSE YOUR VALUE TO THEM.
THAT'S WHEN THEY COME FOR YOUR VITALS: HEART, LUNGS, SPINAL CORD.
BUT ME, I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT. I'M SPECIAL. THEIR *PRIZE POSSESSION*.
I'VE REGENERATED LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF PARTS, AND SHOW NO SIGN OF STOPPING!
THE DOCTORS BELIEVE I'VE GONE INSANE. BUT I KNOW BETTER.
THEY WATCH ME AS I JERK AND TWITCH, MAKE STRANGE MOTIONS, AND ROLL MY TONGUE (WHEN I HAVE ONE).
THEY SAY THIS PROVES I'M MAD. BUT THAT'S BECAUSE THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND. BECAUSE I'VE FOOLED THEM, *ALL* OF THEM.

THEY *THINK* THEY'VE TAKEN MY APPENDAGES FROM ME, GIVEN AWAY MY ARMS AND FEET AND LEGS. BUT THEY HAVEN'T
I'VE *NEVER* GIVEN THEM UP. NEVER SURRENDERED THEM..
...IN GERMANY, AS A WOMAN LICKS STAMPS, A BITTER TASTE WITH PERFORATED EDGES CARESSES THE UPPER TIP OF MY TONGUE...
...WHILE A HINT OF CHERRY LIPSTICK SKIMS THE BOTTOM. SHE'S USING MY TONGUE. ONE OF DOZENS.
...IN TEXAS, I FEEL THE HAND OF A STATE SENATOR--MY HAND--MOVING UP AND DOWN, LEFT AND RIGHT.
HE'S WRITING A LETTER. I CAN DECIPHER WHAT IT SAYS FROM THE MOTION OF MY BORROWED FINGERS.
...IN UTAH, I FEEL MY PENIS, ERECT, SLIDING IN AND OUT OF A NEW VAGINA--
--ONE NOT BELONGING TO THE WIFE OF THE MAN WEARING ONE OF MY ORGANS
NO MATTER THE DISTANCE, I CAN LOOK AND TASTE, TOUCH AND FEEL
CLICK!
THROUGH *EACH* OF MY THOUSANDS OF SCATTERED APPENDAGES.

HERE THEY COME, FOR SOMETHING NEW.
I USED TO SCREAM, USED TO STRUGGLE
HELLO, JERRY. IT'S TIME TO GO!
"DON'T TAKE ME!", I SHOUTED, "DON'T TAKE ME! LEAVE ME ALONE!"
IT'LL GROW BACK IN NO TIME.
THEY THINK I'VE GIVEN UP, GOTTEN USED TO THEIR TORTURES, JUST BECAUSE I DON'T SCREAM ANYMORE.
THE FOOLS!
OK JERRY. WE'RE GOING DOWN TO ROOM SEVEN NOW.
THEY DON'T REALIZE WHAT I CAN DO!

...IN GERMANY, MY TONGUE BECOMES DRY--
--ITS SURFACE TEARS IN DELICIOUS PAIN AS THE WOMAN TRIES TO REMOVE STUCK POSTAGE FROM HER MOUTH
IN TEXAS, I TWITCH MY FINGERS--
INK
--INK SMEARS ACROSS THE SENATOR'S LETTER, FORCING HIM TO START AGAIN
...IN UTAH, I LET MY PENIS GO LIMP--
--HUMILIATING THE MAN WITH THE WOMAN NOT HIS WIFE, THE ORGAN NOT HIS
I COULD TAKE COMMAND OF MY BODY RIGHT NOW EVERY CELL OF IT...
...SEVERAL THOUSAND MEMBERS
...AND MAKE IT SIT UP, SHRUG OFF ITS PARASITES, AND WALK!
MY BODY IS EVERYWHERE...
ROOM 7
DISPERSED THROUGHOUT THE GLOBE HUNDREDS OF EYES AND EARS, ARMS AND LEGS
...AND THEY AREN'T DISTRIBUTED TO JUST ANYONE!
MY "DONATIONS" AREN'T GIVEN TO COMMON PEOPLE--THEY HAVE TO SETTLE FOR ARTIFICIAL IMPLANTS


ONLY THE WEALTHY AND THE POWERFUL GET THE REAL THING. ONLY THE "MOVERS" AND THE "SHAKERS", THE ONES IN CONTROL.
THE ONES WHO KEEP ME HERE, AND USE ME!
7
BUT I MUST WAIT
BIDE MY TIME
BE PATIENT UNTIL THE MOMENT WHEN I'VE ENOUGH HANDS AND EYES, EARS AND FEET, ON THE RIGHT PEOPLE AND AT THE CORRECT LOCATIONS
TO MAKE THINGS REALLY HAPPEN
TO WREAK SOMETHING GOOD!
AH! HERE WE ARE, "ROOM SEVEN".
SEVENTH HELL, SEVENTH HEAVEN

DAMN! I FORGOT MY EARPLUGS!
NURSE, COULD YOU GET THEM FROM THE PREP ROOM?
"EARPLUGS". THEY DON'T USE ANESTHETIC. IT BLOCKS THE REGENERATIVE PROCESS.
THE BODY HAS TO BE FULLY AWAKE AND ALERT, SCREAMING FROM EACH SLICE, SO THAT IT KNOWS IT HAS LOST SOMETHING, AND NEEDS TO REPLACE IT.
I USED TO CRY WHEN THEY CUT INTO ME. BUT NO MORE.
THEY CAN TAKE WHATEVER THEY WANT.
EVA, NEVERMIND. WE'LL START WITHOUT THE EARPLUGS.
WE'RE IN A HURRY.
WHAT!
IT'S ALL PART OF MY PLAN. ANOTHER FOOT, SO TO SPEAK, IN THE DOOR.
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR HIM SCREAMING IN MY DREAMS ALL NIGHT.
IT'S OKAY. IT'S JERRY. HE NEVER MAKES A SOUND.
I'VE GOT THE LEADER'S TOE! BUT THERE'S NOT MUCH I CAN DO WITH A TOE, EXCEPT MAYBE CURL IT WHILE HE'S WALKING DOWN SOME STAIRS
I MAKE HIM TRIP AND BREAK HIS NECK
BUT THAT'S NOT GOOD
THEY'D ONLY GET ANOTHER LEADER.
ONE I DON'T EVEN HAVE A TOE ON.
I HAVE THE NATIONAL SECURITY SECRETARY'S EYES!
WELL...ALRIGHT. BUT THE EXEC OFFICE IS WATCHING. I DON'T WANT ANY MISTAKES.
I'VE LEARNED A LOT THROUGH THOSE EYES. ALL KINDS OF THINGS

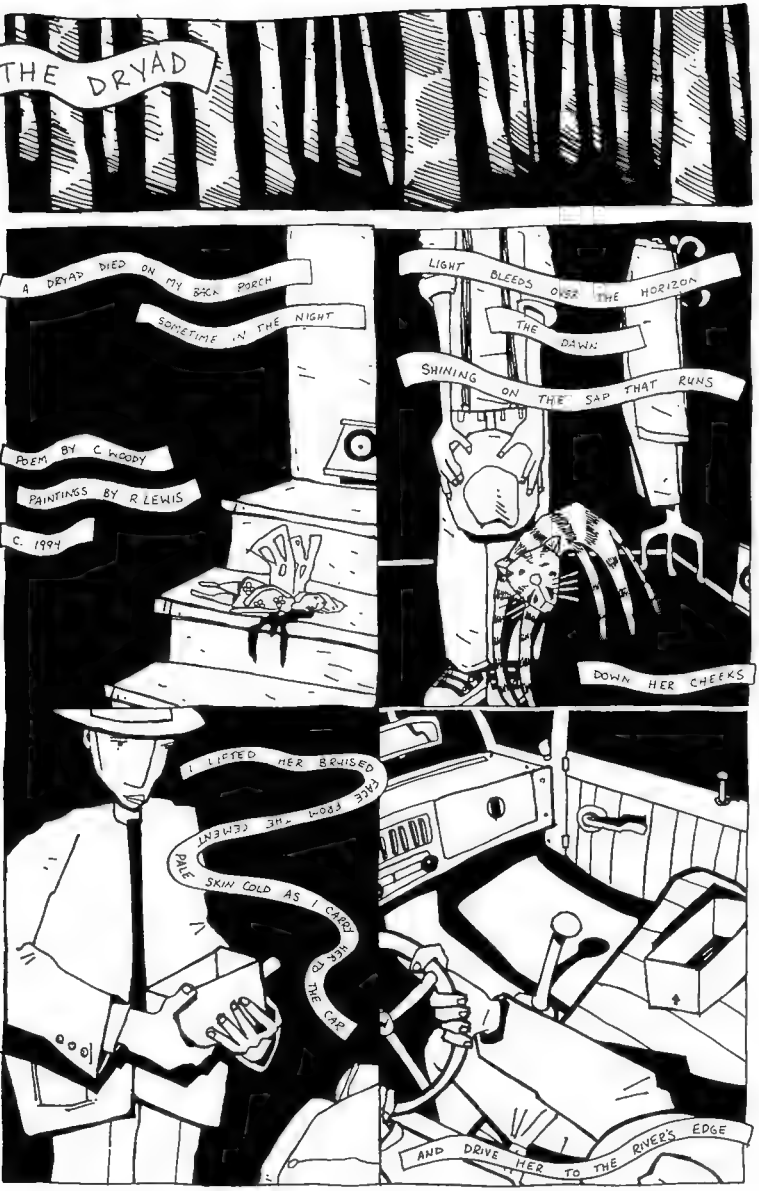
MOST IMPORTANTLY, I'VE LEARNED WHERE WITHIN THE LEADER'S OFFICE "THE BUTTON" IS HIDDEN--
--YOU KNOW, THE BUTTON"--
DO THEY KNOW WHO DID IT?
--THE ONE CREATED BACK DURING THE COLD WAR, TO LAUNCH A NUCLEAR ATTACK.
THE NATIONAL SECURITY SECRETARY LIKES THE BUTTON.
THE PEOPLE'S FRONT IS CLAIMING CREDIT.
"PEOPLE'S FRONT"? WHAT HAPPENED?
HE STARES AT IT ALL THE TIME...
LONGINGLY
LOVINGLY
ALMOST NOSTALGIC
HAVEN'T YOU PLUGGED INTO THE NETS? DIDN'T YOU KNOW WHY THIS DONATION IS BEING MONITERED?
I'M ON A DOUBLE-SHIFT. I HAVEN'T BEEN AWAY FROM THE PR ALL DAY.
HE'LL MISS THE BUTTON GREATLY IN A FEW WEEKS. AFTER IT'S GONE SO WILL I. MY BEST CHANCE TO WREAK SOMETHING GOOD
THE PF TRIED TO KILL THE LEADER THIS MORNING IN ATLANTA, WITH A ROAD MINE...
BUT ALL I HAVE IN THE LEADER'S OFFICE IS HIS RIGHT TOE, AND THE SECRETARY'S EYES. SO CLOSE, AND YET SO FAR
HE WASN'T SCRATCHED, THOUGH. INSTEAD, THEY INJURED MITCHELSON--THE GUY IN CHARGE OF DISMANTLING THE NUCLEAR LAUNCH NETWORK.

MITCHELSON LOST AN ARM IN THE EXPLOSION, AND NEEDS A NEW ONE TO COMPLETE HIS JOB.
HAH
C'MON, JERRY. QUIET DOWN. I PROMISED YOU WEREN'T GOING TO BE ANY TROUBLE!
HAH, HA. HAH
KLAT

MOTHER KNOWS IT'S NOT MY FAULT. SHE SAW IT. SHE SEES EVERYTHING.
IN SIXTH PERIOD--HISTORY--MR. MURPHY TOLD US OF THE INQUISITION...
..WHEN GOOD PEOPLE WERE HUNTED LIKE ANIMALS, TRIED, TORTURED, AND KILLED.
Father
THAT'S WHEN THEY STARTED.

I DON'T LIKE TROUBLE, SO I TOOK A DIFFERENT ROUTE HOME.
BUT THEY SAW ME ANYWAY.
POK!
I TOLD THEM TO STOP...
..TO LEAVE ME ALONE...
...BUT THEY DIDN'T *LISTEN*.
THEN *FATHER* CAME.

THEY SHOULD HAVE *LISTENED*.


THE DRYAD
A DRYAD DIED ON MY BACK PORCH
SOMETIME IN THE NIGHT
POEM BY C WOODY
PAINTINGS BY R LEWIS
C. 1994
LIGHT BLEEDS OVER THE HORIZON
THE DAWN
SHINING ON THE SAP THAT RUNS
DOWN HER CHEEKS
I LIFTED HER BRUISED
PALE SKIN COLD AS I CARRY
FREE FROM THE CEMENT
HER TO
THE CAR
AND DRIVE HER TO THE RIVER'S EDGE

I WATCH THE DARK WATERS ROIL
IN DIRTY KNOTS
AS I LAY HER IN THE CURRENT
THE FILM ON THE WATER
PARTING
FOR A MOMENT
BEFORE SWALLOWING HER WHOLE
AS SHE FLOATS
HEAVILY
AWAY.

Netherworld Internship

I've come to two realizations lately
First: that like most folks, I am mortal, and so will probably die.
And two: my house is haunted!!
Still though, my body may lie. I'm not going into this ghost business cold.
I've got an internship
This is Scylla. She'll be showing me the ropes.
fetch the chains
Cool.
So do I hold 'em up and shake 'em and say "Boooooo" or what?
No, you attach one end to your worldly sins
And the other ends
Wh-Hey! Where'd you get that?
BAG
SINS
CLICK!
CLICK!
CLINK!
CLAMP!
CLINK!
NOT THERE!
Now wait.
UH!
THUD!
CLUMP
How long does this part last?
He'll try it for eternity and see how you do
I'm starting to consider this less seriously as a career

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE NEXT BRITISH INVASION?

story and art by **Nabiel Kanan**

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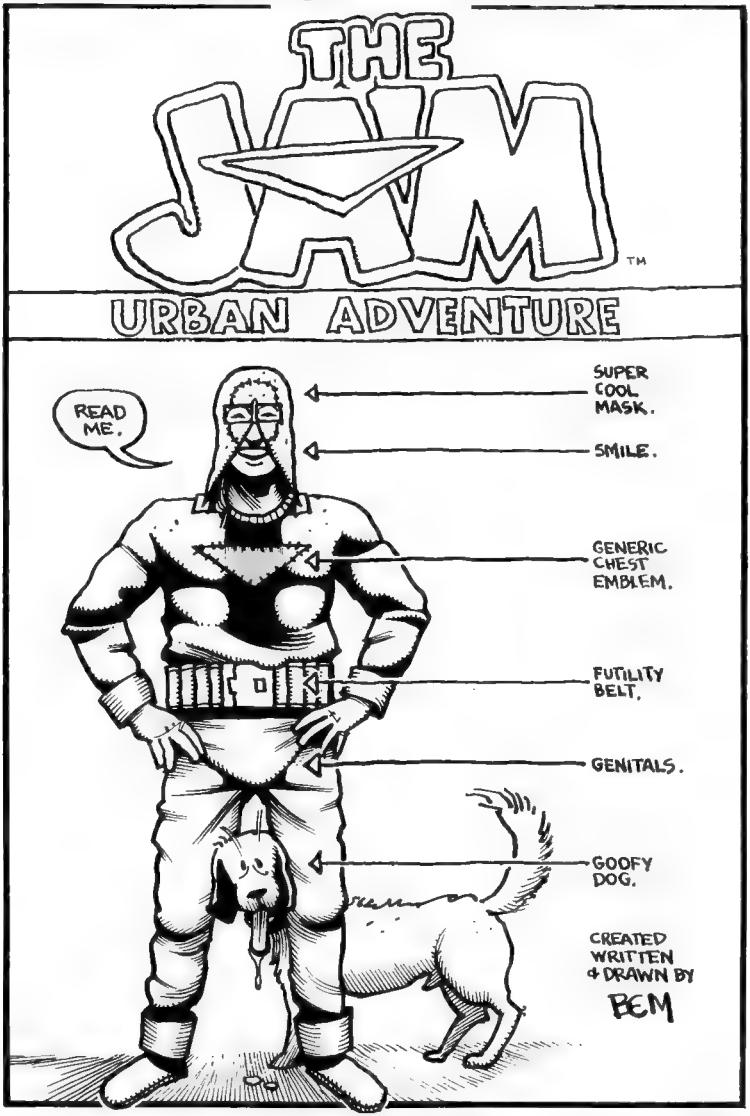

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APRIL / MAY 1995

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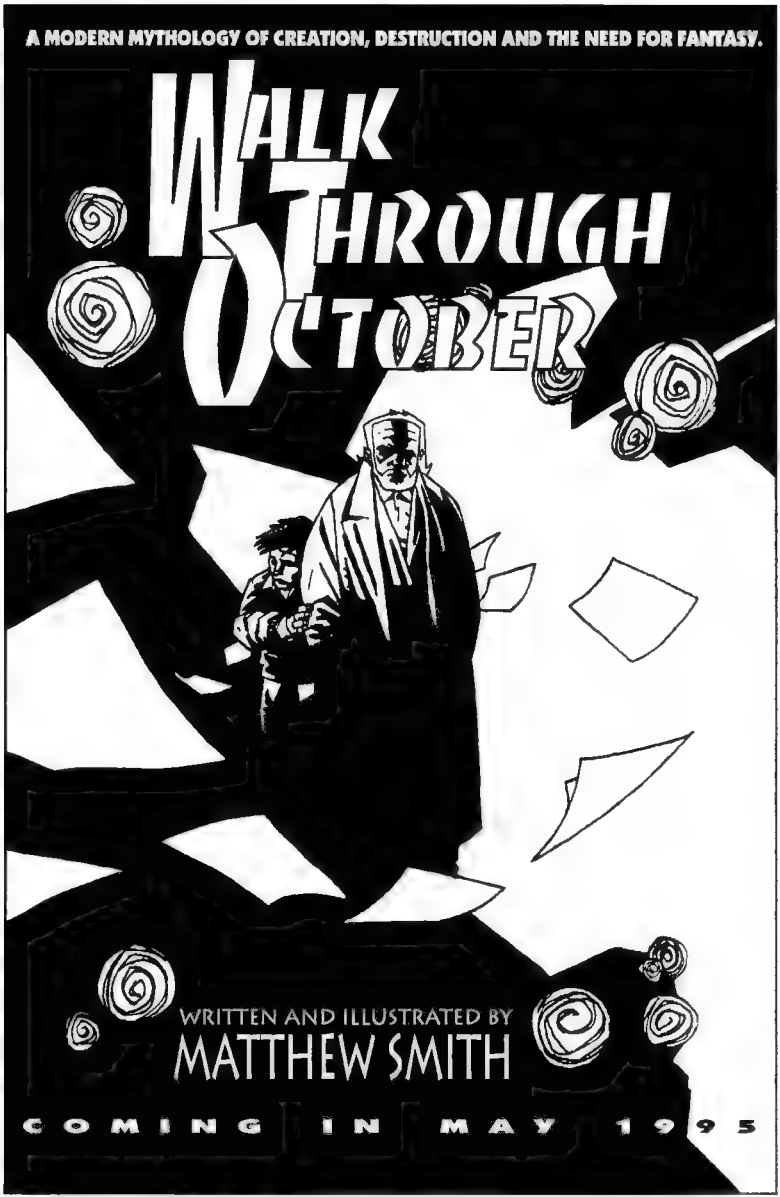
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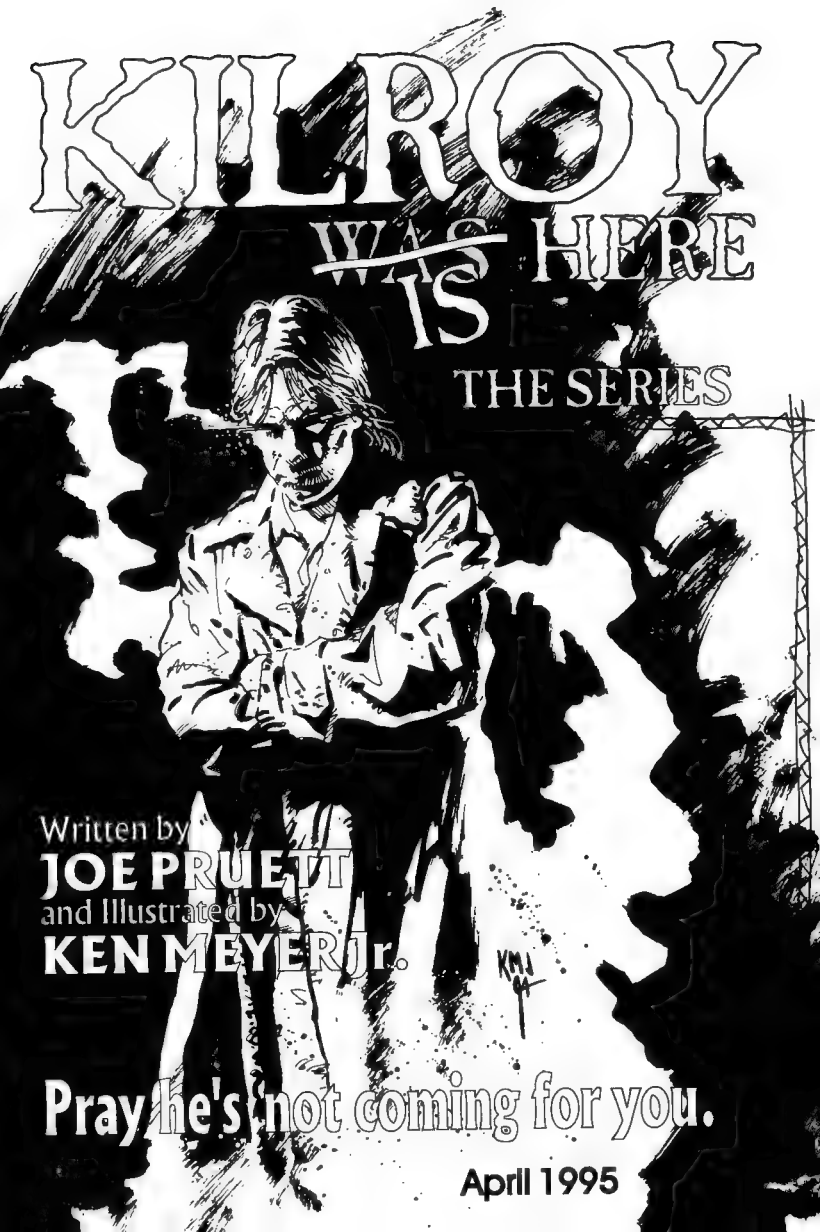
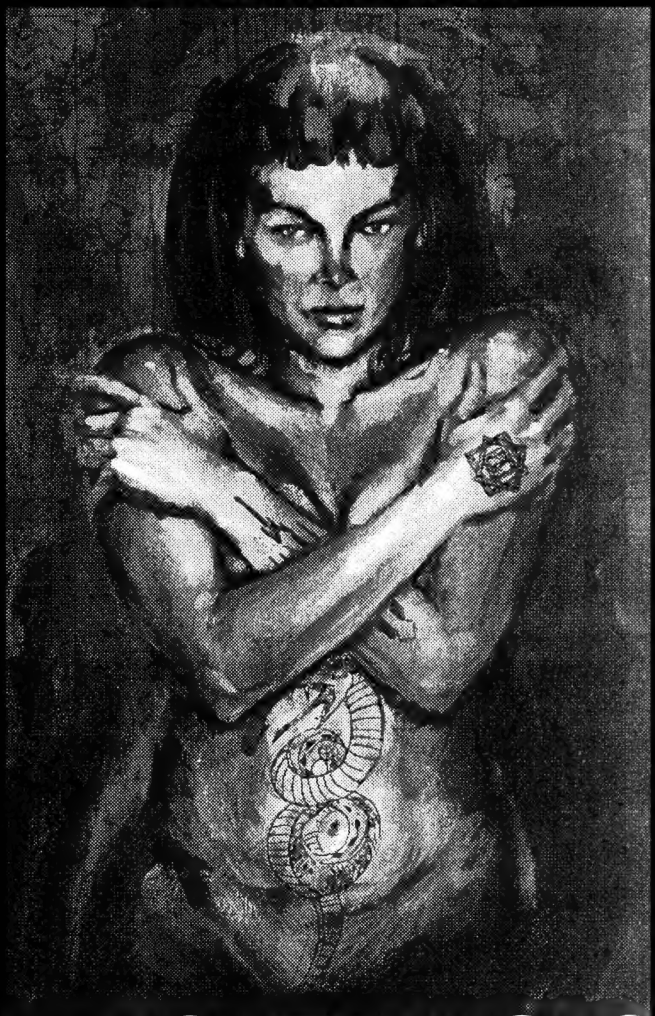

KILROY
WAS IS HERE
THE SERIES
Written by
JOE PRUETT
and Illustrated by
KEN MEYER Jr.
KMJ
Pray he's not coming for you.
April 1995

"The belief in a supernatural source of evil is not necessary; men alone are quite capable of every wickedness.

Joseph Conrad, [1911]: Under Western Eyes



SLAUGHTERHOUSE

MAY 1995

We're going to do something a little different with this letters page. First we'll start off with a couple of letters that have recently come in on some earlier issues, then we'll move on to a couple of letters from our friend from overseas, Olav.
Next issue we should be back to normal.
Remember, besides meeting people at cons, letters are the only way we can see how we're doing in the eyes of our readers, so WRITE!

Link W. Herrman
Goddard, KS

Joe,
I'm glad to see that Marc Gacy and Ted Slampyak are again working on JAZZ AGE CHRONICLES. I enjoyed the piece in CALIBER PRESENTS many moons ago. Unfortunately I've been unable to find most of the series that Caliber published.
I enjoy Brian Bolland's MR. MAMOULIAN nearly every time. It's so unique and idiosycratic. There is the rare occasion that I miss something.
EXIT was an interesting piece. The visuals and art interested me more than the story. I found his paneless panels and transitions masterful. The text led you from panel to panel. (Panel being very subjective in this piece.)
"14.2.99" is one of the more satisfying of ALAN MOORE'S SONGBOOK as a piece of paper sans music. Any idea on the release date of the album in the U.S.?
The segment of TWILIGHT PEOPLE was interesting, but I feel that it suffered in serialization. The trade paperback was much more satisfying to me. I feel that it should have been printed in bigger chunks than eight pages a segment.
HE ASKED was an amusing piece but the art was a little too rough for my taste.
The MICRA prose piece whetted my appetite. I may have to hunt up some back issues. It appears I'll get a good story at a bargain from the looks of it. Good SF is hard to find in this medium.
Doug Wheeler is such a twisted genius. I'm suprised he can keep coming up with these perverse desecrations of fables and other classic tales. I can think of no higher compliment for these one pagers.
EULOGY TO MARX was beautifully illustrated. I found the use of images effective in implying Paul Popes feelings for the man and his work.

You can order back issues of JAZZ AGE CHRONICLES directly from Caliber (issues #1-5 are still available for $2.50 each—sorry but #6 is sold out). If you can't find the MICRA series, write to me and I'll put you in touch with the creator, Lamar Waldron. He's local and probably has some back issues in stock.
Also, hope you enjoyed the special EXIT story in this issue, Link. Look for the ongoing series debuting from Caliber Comics this summer, edited by yours truly.

Link W. Herrman
Goddard, KS

Joe,
Thanks for showing me Terry Moore's STRANGERS IN PARADISE. I don't think I would have taken a look at it except for the piece published here. I am now a regular reader of his book.
I wish Neil Gaiman would draw more often. This taste show with Alan Moore's song is interesting. I don't particularly like his style that well, but I'd love to see him illustrate one of his own pieces. It would give an interesting insight into his creative process. Any chance of you getting him to let you publish a sketchbook of his work in the pages of NEGATIVE BURN.
I'm amazed at your writing abilities. Your KILROY pieces are so effective and moving, even though some people might feel have little or no plot. These are more mood fables than than the normal short story. Kilroy is a superb character. Marc Erickson did a excellent job of illustating it.
Evan Dorkin's MILK AND CHEESE was amusing. His sense of humor is biting and pervese is as Doug Wheeler's.
Paul Pope's TRIUMPH OF HUNGER was much more effective than his EULOGY TO MARX. I like the way he puts images in opposition so effectively.
The revised THE REAL THING is more effective than Brian Michael Bendis' original in his PARTS OF THE WHOLE. A worthwhile read if you can find it. It shows his talent in the early stages of his career.
Edward Martin III's THE CALCULUS TEST is a nightmare of gigantic proportions to college students. I shuddered at the thought that it could have happened to me in college. The art team was effective.

The sad thing is that THE CALCULUS TEST is a real life story that actually happened to Edward in college. At least he has a sense of humor about it.
Glad you liked STRANGERS IN PARADISE, Link. It's currently one of my favorite titles out on the market today.
As for a Neil Gaiman sketchbook ... well, we'll see.

Letters

Olav Beemer
The Netherlands

Dear Joe,
Another mixed bag issue showing a wide variety in themes and styles. That would be a description quite fit for NEGATIVE BURN #16, yet another issue of this series which came out absurdly quick after the previous one, but who am I to complain about that? For starters, I think of the combination of Alan Moore and Terry Moore, on this issue's installment of the already fabled ALAN MOORE'S SONGBOOK, has worked out wonderfully well. Not only did the lay-out work very good with the text, it also gave Terry the opportunity to make full-page pieces of artwork. Pieces in which he could show off his vast range of talents. Being an admirer of Terry's work, over in his own mag STRANGERS IN PARADISE, you can imagine how overjoyed I am to see his name and work pop up in the pages of NEGATIVE BURN every so often! Keep him around, okay? GOTTA GO was not only a very funny and hilarious poem, I was especially amazed at the artwork from the hands of Joel Thomas and Tim Petty. Without a doubt, their quite innovative and original style fits extremely well with the overall atmosphere of the poem, only enhancing the quality of it. Any chance these two talents will return to these pages anytime soon or what?
KABUKI was a decent origin story, but apart from that, it didn't offer much. I mean, all we got to see was a fragment of the past, a nice background story, yet besides that, nothing more. All Kabuki did was think back to the past. Thus, I think it's a safe bet to conclude this Kabuki saga will eventually be continued in this series, featuring adventures occurring in the present, am I right? Anyway, the artwork looks promising and the scripting is rather realistic and well thought-out, so I'm nevertheless looking forward to seeing Kabuki appear again.
Lastly, I was wondering why, since the fifteenth issue of this book, the Caliber Press logo has been gracing the covers of NEGATIVE BURN. I always thought Caliber Press was the all-encompassing publisher, and you guys worked under the Caliber imprint?
Anywhichway, good issue once again. See ya next ish!

Let's try to answer all your questions in order, shall we. I'm thrilled to be publishing Terry Moore as much as I have. Terry has a standing invitation to work with us any time he likes. Unfortunately, I don't have any more of Terry's work scheduled in the near future, but he did do a pin-up in this past December's KILROY: REVELATIONS so go look for it!
Joel Thomas is now the regular artist on Malibu's PRIME so why not give it a try and check out some really terrific art! I've seen some advance art he's done and it's fabulous! This was Tim Petty's first published comic work, but I expect to see a lot more of his work in the future, as well!
As you may already realize, KABUKI by David Mack is now a regular series from Caliber Press.
Caliber Press is our publisher. If you look back on every previous cover of NEGATIVE BURN you'll notice that they've been always been credited with that fact. As you may have noticed now, though, our "official" imprint is now called Caliber Comics. I think now when you see the new logo you'll immediately think of "quality" comics. If you don't believe me then check out the latest offerings and you'll see what I mean. Caliber is definitely one of the rising companies in the industry.

Olav Beemer
The Netherlands

Dear Joe,
NEGATIVE BURN #17 surprised me. Not only because of the wide variety of creators and genres it once more bestowed upon its readers, but mainly because of the sixteen pages containing the further adventures of Phillip Hester's BONESHAKER. Recently, I've seen Phillip's work pop up here and there in the pages of some of the mainstream publishers, most recently in DC's SHOWCASE '95 series, but I find his work here most fascinating, for it is in these pages he has the courage and the freedom to experiment with lay-outs and innovative ways of storytelling. The long, vertical panels and his daring use of black and white never fail to bring about quite some enjoyment and, of course, appreciation. Hopefully, his work will continue to appear in these very pages.
Then, I must admit that for the first time since it began appearing in this series, I actually found myself intrigued with the installment of LOST LAUGHTER. Having become quite interested in the so-called self-publishing genre over the last year, picking up masterpieces like Terry Moore's STRANGERS IN PARADISE, Colleen Doran's A DISTANT SOIL, and WANDERING STAR from Teri S. Wood, the style used by creator Jeff Nicholson suddenly appealed to me. In other words, you've once more opened my eyes to some solid and enjoyable work I was previously oblivious to.
Also, I find it interesting to see you dedicating pages every now and then to comic book series you, Joe, think are worth checking out. I often find it very enjoyable to see what professionals think is worthwhile in today's industry, so the same goes for the editor of what is one of the very best anthology books around. I agree with you on SiP, which is about the best thing to happen to the industry in the nineties. Also intriguing, at least to me, are Hahn's PRIVATE BEACH, Mitchell and Christy's VERY VICKI, Cohen and Sherman's STRANGE ATTRACTORS and, finally, Wood's WANDERING STAR. Thanks for listening once again. You're doing a splendid job, so keep it up!

I'm glad #17 surprised you, Olav. That's part of the fun of doing a book like NEGATIVE BURN. I'm also happy that LOST LAUGHTER started to grow on you. Go back and get the original series from Jeff!
When I started doing NEGATIVE BURN one of the things I really wanted to do was to open up reader's eyes to some of the gems available in the small press. It's gratifying to know that I'm succeeding. Look for a prelude tale of Teri S. Wood's next series, DARKLIGHT, in our second anniversary issue (issue 25) this summer! In the future, we'll be presenting original shorts from Colleen Doran's A DISTANT SOIL and Martin Wagner's HEPCATS, plus whatever else I can uncover.

dig it!
NOWHERESVILLE